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the people, especially the small proprietors, by proper laws and to help them with money. He suggested that the surplus fund of 80 lakhs and the wealth lying unused in the several Devaswoms might be made available to the ryots by means of loans at moderate interest.

Mr. K. G. Sesha Aiyer (Member, Central Association, Trivandrum) advocated the opening of model farms in all Districts, where agriculture might be taught as a subject of study with reference to modern scientific advancements and results. He submitted that agricultural farming, the most important industry of the State, was entitled to a fair share of the State funds, even to a larger share than fell to the development of commerce or the mechanical arts.

Dewan's reply.—The suggestions will be considered. Government will endeavour to have at least one model farm started in the near future.

86. Equalisation of assessment in the same Provertis.

Mr. J. Mathew also spoke of the arbitrary inequalities in the assessments levied in different plots in the same field and urged the equalisation of taxes on lands in the same Provertis.

Dewan's reply.—Will be considered.

87. Reduction of Payattuputtom tax.

Mr. Kurien Kathanar Mathen (Member, Changanacheri Taluk) said that in assessing garden lands, the old rates were being adhered to without any regard to situation, productiveness, present condition, &c. He referred to the assessments in the Provertis of Changanacheri and Manchatikara and requested that the lands might be properly classified and the assessment made uniform with that in other Taluks.

Dewan's reply.—This is a matter which was mentioned also in the memorial presented at Changanacheri. The block statements have not been sanctioned. The representation will be considered when the statements come up.

88. Compulsory and free primary education.

Mr. C. Raghava Menon (Member, Changanacheri Taluk) suggested that primary education should be made compulsory and given free to all classes. He referred to the statistics furnished by the Census of 1901 and the Administration Reports and said that, though Travancore was ahead of other Provinces and States in point of literacy, only a fraction of the total population could be said to be receiving any instruction.

Mr. M. Krishna Pillai (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) urged the passing of a law making it compulsory on

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parents and guardians to give their children primary education in Malayalam, the language of the country.

Mr. K. G. Sesha Aiyer (Member, Central Association, Trivandrum) said that primary education had already engaged the anxious attention of Government and for the advancement of which Government had already done a great deal. Happily, Travancore stands ahead of both British India and other Native States both in respect of the percentage of pupils under instruction to total population and in respect of the percentage that the expenditure on education bears to the entire revenue of the State. He observed that appreciating as the people did the liberal policy of Government in the matter of education, they had ventured to believe that any reasonable suggestion that might be made in respect of education, any suggestion that might be calculated to secure to the people the fullest benefit of such liberal policy would receive the sympathetic consideration of Government. To make the endeavours of Government as regards primary education conducive to national efficiency, he submitted that Government should be prepared to make primary education both free and compulsory. Organization and intelligence in every function of national life is necessary for nationa. survival. No nation could contribute its full share to the total progress of human activity if even the apparently most insignificant worker in the community did not receive special and intelligent training. Modern conditions demanded that for the achievement of national success, the plough boy and craftsman, no less than the statesman, should receive intelligent training. If national fitness rested, as it undoubtedly did, on trained intelligence, then organization of even the primary stages of the nation's training is a really national affair; and primary schools where the first stage in the training of the national intelligence for national ends was reached should sooner or later fall absolutely into the hands of Government. Under a uniform system of primary education, all children should be enabled to transform their usual meaningless "why" into reasoned inquiry and to turn their ceaseless natural activity into the co-operative work of eye, hand and leg. This, he said, is the first stage to be reached if the children of to-day should become good and efficient citizens to-morrow. It should not be left to the parents to decide whether they would allow their children to reach that stage. Education, he remarked, was the proper office of Government, a constituent function of the State. The parents are under no legal obligation to educate their children. Hence arose the necessity of making primary education compulsory

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and that necessity had been recognised in several countries; and that even the poor might not feel the primary education of their children a burden, it was also desirable to make it free. Government, he said, has already in their memorable Proceedings on the subject of Primary education declared that backward classes would be given primary education free and he prayed that the boon might be extended to other classes as well. He therefore submitted that primary education should be made compulsory throughout the State and that it should be given free in all Government and State aided schools.

Dewan's reply.—Free and compulsory education is not such an easy matter as one would imagine. Judging from the literature on the question of compulsory education in Baroda, my impression is that it is likely the system will land us on having to provide boarding and lodging houses for the children of the poorer classes of the community. The trial in Baroda has, I believe, resulted in an expenditure of something like Rs. 15,000 in a single Taluk. Apart from this, however, we have advanced in respect of education as far as one could wish under existing circumstances, while in several other important matters we are far behind the times and behind other States and Provinces. The unequal development of the different parts of the body politic is not a sign of healthy growth. Whereas disproportionately large attention has been paid to and much expenditure incurred on education, medical relief, and one or two other departments of State activity, others have been neglected and even starved. Not to mention other departments, there was the question of improving agriculture, for instance, which was one of the subjects brought forward by the members and so ably argued and pressed on the attention of Government. Before we proceed to improve the condition of agriculture we must have land settlement and improvement in the system of taxation. Neither of these essentials has yet been secured in Travancore. We have the bulk of the State still unsettled and portions of the land-tax still continue to be levied in grain and in this respect we are centuries behind the times. The suggestions made in respect of primary education are doubtless good and I should not be understood to discourage members wishing to have further improvements made in education. They will be noted and endeavour will be made to give effect to them as far as possible. What I wish to impress on your minds is that there are other matters which demand the immediate and serious attention of Government and have a claim upon the State funds even more urgently than questions connected with education.

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